

ABC WORLD NEWS TONIGHT
4 June 1986

FILE ONLY

6:30 P.M.

Resolution of Spy Cases

PETER JENNINGS: A husband and a wife accused of spying for Israel in this country have pleaded guilty to the charge in a deal worked out with the Federal Government. But as our senior correspondent John Scali reports, this may not defuse a very touchy situation between Israel and Washington.

JOHN SCALI: It was revealed in court today that Jonathan J. Pollard met secretly dozens of times with Israeli representatives to whom he delivered suitcases full of U.S. secret documents. His Israeli handlers were so delighted with his output that they gave Pollard the name Danny Cohen, an Israeli passport, and a foreign bank account.

As his wife sobbed in the courtroom, federal prosecutors told how Pollard had used his position as a civilian analyst in the U.S. Navy to steal hundreds of documents that the Israelis wanted.

Pollard's attorney, Richard Hibey, argued afterward that Pollard's actions were not intended to harm the U.S.

RICHARD HIBEY: This is a person who is, notwithstanding his plea to this particular offense, totally committed to America.

SCALI: The government's indictment also named four Israeli co-conspirators, including an Israeli Air Force Colonel, Aviem Sella, and three others.

In Jerusalem, an Israeli spokesman reaffirmed that the Israeli government had never authorized the Pollard espionage operation. But U.S. Attorney Joseph DiGenova indicated Israel's responsibility is yet to be determined.

ABC News has been told that two other Americans and several more Israelis are being investigated. New evidence turned up recently has convinced some investigators that there is a much wider Israeli network in the U.S. which dates back to the 1950s and which is still in place. The Israelis deny this.

JENNINGS: In Baltimore today, the jury has begun its deliberations in the trial of the accused man spying for the Soviet Union, Ronald Pelton.

In closing arguments, the government attorney called for the maximum penalty of life imprisonment and said Pelton would still be selling secrets to the Soviets if he hadn't been caught. The defense repeated its contention that Pelton's civil rights had been violated and that his confession had been obtained illegally.